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NOFORN
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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/I AND NEA/IR
NSC STAFF FOR OLLIVANT AND MAGSAMEN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ECON](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: IRAQI FM ZEBARI NOT REASSURED BY TRIP TO TEHRAN

REF: A. BAGHDAD 1187
[B](#). BAGHDAD 762

Classified by Minister-Counselor for Political Military
Affairs Michael Corbin for reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#). (C) Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari said he was pessimistic about Iran's intentions toward Iraq following a May 20-21 trip to Tehran in which he failed to narrow differences with the Iranian government over issues such as cross-border water flow, border security incidents including Iranian shelling of Kurdish terrorists sheltering in Kurdish villages, and demarcation of the Iran-Iraq border along the Shatt al-Arab waterway and into the Gulf, according to a readout from MFA Undersecretary Labeed Abbawi to Pol-Mil Mincouns.

[2](#). (U) Zebari met with Iranian officials including President Mahmud Ahmedi-Nejad, Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki, and Secretary of the Supreme Council for National Security Said Jalili, according to press accounts. Iranian and Iraqi media reported that they discussed Iraqi reconstruction, Iranian concerns about the presence of the Mujaheddin e-Khalq (MeK) in Iraq, and security of Iranian pilgrims following April bombings targeting pilgrims in Iraq that killed more than 150 people, among other bilateral issues.

[3](#). (C) In the meeting with Pol-Mil Mincouns following his return, Abbawi said in response to a question that Zebari had not been reassured by the visit. The Iranians are focused on the June 12 presidential election and afterward will seek to cause trouble for moderates in the region, he said. He worried that if Hizballah won in the upcoming Lebanese elections, Iran would have a platform to strike out at the Arab world. Abbawi also mentioned that Zebari will travel to Damascus on May 22 for a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

[4](#). (C) COMMENT: The Iraqis appear to have little leverage toward ending Iranian support for extremists in Iraq and resolving the border disputes, including their request to reconsider the 1975 Algiers Accord granting to Iran sovereignty over the eastern bank of the Shatt. That agreement and the shifting channel of the Shatt calls into question sovereignty over the Khor al-Amaya Oil Terminal (KAAOT) in the Gulf and also undermines Iraqi claims to water from the Karkha river and other rivers that flow from Iran. Although Zebari is among the few senior Iraqi officials who have let their disagreements with Iran become public (reftels), he maintained a positive public posture during this visit. However, we have no reason to question Abbawi's account of his lack of satisfaction on these issues in Tehran.
HILL